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FM AMEMBASSY HANOI

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 7213

INFO RUEHHM/AMCONSUL HO CHI MINH 4327

RUEHZS/ASEAN REGIONAL FORUM COLLECTIVE

RUEHZN/ENVIRONMENT SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COLLECTIVE

RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 3246

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RUEHHK/AMCONSUL HONG KONG 1359

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RUEHCN/AMCONSUL CHENGDU 0346

RUEHIN/AIT TAIPEI 1556

RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC

RUEHPH/CDC ATLANTA GA

RUEHRC/DEPT OF AGRICULTURE WASHINGTON DC

RUEAUSA/DEPT OF HHS WASHINGTON DC

RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC//USDP/ISA/AP//

RHMFISS/CJCS WASHINGTON DC//J2/J3/J5//

RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC//DHO-3//

RHMFIUU/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI//J00/J2/J3/J5//

RHEFAFM/DIRAFMIC FT DETRICK MD//MA-1A//

RUEHSUN/USUN ROME IT

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 HANOI 000197

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

SIPDIS

STATE FOR EAP/MLS, EAP/EP, INR, OES/STC, OES/IHA, MED
STATE PASS TO USAID FOR ANE AND GH

STATE PASS TO HHS/OGHA (STIEGER/VALDEZ/DMILLER/HICKEY)

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE FOR OSD/ISA/AP (STERN)

HHS/OSSI/DSI PASS TO OGHA (WSTIEGER/LVALDEZ/CHICKEY) AND

FIC/NIH (RGLASS) AND DIV-FLU (COX/MOHEN)

USDA PASS TO APHIS, FAS (OSTA AND OCRA), FSIS

BANGKOK FOR RMO, CDC (MALISON), USAID (MACARTHUR/BRADY) BANGKOK FOR
APHIS (NCARDENAS), REO(JWALLER)

BEIJING FOR HHS HEALTH ATTACHE (ROSS)

PHNOM PENH FOR CDC INFLUENZA COORDINATOR(BRADY)

ROME FOR FAO

VIENTIANE FOR CDC INFLUENZA COORDINATOR (CORWIN)

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [TBIO](#) [AMED](#) [AMGT](#) [CASC](#) [EAGR](#) [PINR](#) [KFLU](#) [VM](#)

SUBJECT: AVIAN INFLUENZA UPDATE - ANIMAL OUTBREAKS SPREAD, POSSIBLE
NEW HUMAN INFECTION

REF: A. HANOI 80 B. 07 HANOI 2116

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11. (U) Summary: The Government of Vietnam has confirmed recent localized animal outbreaks in seven provinces scattered throughout the country and has noted reports of dead poultry found in rivers and streams in northern Vietnam -- a sign of a possible new bird flu outbreak during a prolonged cold spell. As a result, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD) has asked provinces to take urgent measures to prevent new outbreaks of bird flu following a reoccurrence of the virus that has killed four people in the last two months, bringing the total number of human cases reported to 104 with 50 deaths. Delays in detecting poultry outbreaks, continued high risk behaviors by the public despite awareness campaigns, delays by patients in seeking health care, delays in diagnosis at care facilities, and instances of poor communications between government authorities remain causes for concern.

Animal Outbreaks in at Least Seven Provinces

12. (SBU) In addition to the animal outbreaks in Quang Binh and Thai

Nguyen provinces reported in ref A, the GVN reported outbreaks in the northern provinces of Hai Duong, Nam Dinh, Quang Ninh and Tuyen Quang and the southern province of Long An. In each case, the Provincial Departments of Animal Health culled all poultry in affected flocks, and reports from some sites indicate that local officials have carried out other standard measures for control, such as testing for the presence of the virus and environmental sanitization. Additionally, DAH stated on its web site (www.dah.gov.vn) that callers to an animal health department hotline reported large numbers of dead birds in five northern provinces (Bac Giang, Hai Duong, Ha Tay, Nam Dinh, and Bac Ninh), though it did not give more details. DAH separately warned that bad weather, combined with illegal transportation and trade of poultry products, could easily lead to a recurrence of bird flu.

Details on Poultry Deaths

¶3. (U) On February 18, the GVN was notified of an outbreak at one poultry raiser in Cu Tri village, Ngu Hung commune, Thanh Mien district, in coastal Hai Duong province (approximately 50 kilometers east of Hanoi), which killed 640 out of 800 unvaccinated poultry (specifically 240 chickens, 200 ducks and 200 muscovy ducks), (Note: Hai Duong is a priority province in which the GVN has made chicken and duck vaccination mandatory). A day earlier, an outbreak was reported in a poultry flock in Ngoc Thanh village, Cong Hoa commune, Vu Ban district, in Nam Dinh province (another priority province, about 100 kilometers southeast of Hanoi). Over one-half of a 3,450 poultry flock aged between one and two months died prior to receiving vaccinations. On February 16, an outbreak occurred in Thai Son commune, Ham Yen district, Tuyen Quang province, northwest of Hanoi, resulting in 90 deaths out of flock of 142 unvaccinated poultry. In Long An province, a February 9 bird flu outbreak at a farm in Phuoc Loi commune, Ben Luc district, killed 150 out of 700 ducks which had not yet received second vaccinations. Two districts

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in Quang Ninh Province, a priority area on the Chinese border, reported outbreaks at poultry farms resulting in the deaths of 855 ducks, which had yet to receive the second round of vaccinations.

GVN Response

¶4. (U) In response to the recent animal outbreaks, MARD Minister Cao Duc Phat, who also serves as head of the National Steering Committee for Avian Influenza Prevention and Control, on February 17 urged ministries, departments and localities to take preventive measures to early detect and deal with bird flu outbreaks. DAH has asked local provinces to set up inspection teams to closely monitor bird flu incidents and created a hotline to deal with incidents of bird flu. DAH also ordered local areas to provide vaccinations to poultry, especially free-range water birds, to prevent transmission of the virus and to strictly inspect poultry transportation, slaughtering, and trading, particularly in border areas, such as Quang Ninh, where officials acknowledge they have not been able to control poultry smuggling from China. MOH also asked local health officials to raise public awareness of the danger of the bird flu and advised residents to eat only vaccinated poultry products.

Possible New Human Infection

¶5. (SBU) Doctors at National Pediatric Hospital, Hanoi, reported over the weekend that a seven-year-old child from Hai Duong Province had tested positive for the A (H5N1) virus, but this was not confirmed by subsequent testing at the national influenza reference center, NIHE. The child remains hospitalized in serious condition.

Comment

¶6. (SBU) An uptick in animal infection is expected during the colder, winter months, when influenza virus transmission usually peaks, and may explain the recent concentration of poultry outbreaks

in the northern provinces. Most of the outbreaks have occurred in small, unvaccinated flocks, though the unconfirmed reports of dead birds in various water sources may indicate wider spread. The GVN has called for a high surveillance for possible human cases.

MICHALAK